



Safety in the teaching laboratory is the goal at Texas A&M University. Implementation of safety procedures is not intended to create a restrictive environment, but rather to assist in the safe conduct of research and teaching activities involving possibly hazardous materials. The rules are stated to help educators maintain safe working conditions and reduce the chance of exposure to biohazards.

## FOR LABORATORY EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS

- Be aware that some of the bacteria used in microbiology laboratories can make you or others who live in your household sick, especially young children, even if they have never visited the laboratory.
- If you work in a laboratory, it is possible for you to bring bacteria home through contaminated lab coats, pens, notebooks, and other items that you use in the microbiology laboratory.
- Avoid taking laboratory supplies outside of the laboratory to limit the spread of germs.
- People working with any infectious agents must be aware potential hazards and must be trained and proficient in biosafety practices and techniques required for handling such agents safely, in particular to:
  - Wash hands frequently while working in and immediately before leaving the microbiology laboratory and follow proper hand washing practices. This is especially important to do before preparing food or baby bottles, before eating, and before contact with young children.
  - Leave food, drinks, or personal items like car keys, cell phones, and mp3 players outside of the laboratory. These items may become contaminated if you bring them into the laboratory or touch them while working in the laboratory.
  - Wear a lab coat or other protective garments over personal clothing when working in a microbiology laboratory. Remove protective garments before leaving for non-laboratory areas (cafeteria, library, administrative offices). Dispose of protective garments appropriately or deposit for laundering. Lab coats should never be removed from the laboratory except when they are to be laundered by the institution.
- If you work with pathogenic bacteria in a laboratory, be aware that these bacteria can make you sick. Know the signs and symptoms of disease and watch for symptoms of infection which could include diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps. Call your health care provider if you or a family member has any of these symptoms.